Nation

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The Nation's annual tourism guide

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The Tomahawk Chop

by Will Nicholls

Suspended Senator Patrick Brazeau, affectionately known around the office as Uncle Tomahawk from his time as an aboriginal apologist for Stephen Harper's attacks on First Nations, claims he is now "loaded for bear."

Despite facing a variety of criminal charges, Brazeau says he is preparing to make a political comeback. In the meantime he is working on an autobiography with a helping hand from a few ghost writers, one imagines, that will more or less tell the story of his political journey, his hardships and his naivety in trusting other politicians whilst following his dreams of a better world for First Nations.

The comeback statement might seem like a pipe dream given his past and present. There are the charges stemming from his Senate housing expenses over his claims to a residence at his former father-in-law's home on the Kitigan Zibi First Nation. Add to that charges of assault and sexual assault in a trial now underway. More charges for assault and cocaine possession await a court date. He was in court-ordered rehab after his preliminary hearing. As if all that wasn't enough to convince him to lay low for a while, he racked up another arrest last October for being drunk and disorderly while, according to police, playing with a knife in a car that didn't belong to him.

Anything is possible in the political arena. Brazeau's lawyer, Christian Deslauriers, suggested the embattled former Conservative and now Independent senator could return because the suspension motion adopted by the Senate in 2013 would no longer be in effect with the dissolution of Parliament.

"Once the election is called and the assembly is dissolved, then all the motions are obsolete and have no effect anymore," Deslauriers said. Of course the upper chamber could bring a new motion to suspend him. If it doesn't, Brazeau would again begin receiving his $138,700 salary as a working senator.

But is it actual work that Brazeau intends to do? His past record doesn't provide much cause for hope in that regard. The Senate attendance register showed that he was absent for 25% of the Senate's 72 sittings between June 2011 and April 2012. He was also absent for 31% of the meetings of the human rights committee, where he was deputy-chair, and for 65% of meetings at the Senate Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, on which he sat.

The option of permanently removing him from office is interesting, but not easy. The Canadian constitution says senators can be expelled only if they are convicted of a criminal offense with a prison sentence of two or more years. The class of assault and sexual assault charges he faces are only summary offenses that don't carry such a penalty. Except, perhaps, for the fraud charges relating to his residency, all other charges he faces don't meet this threshold either.

That's pretty good news for any senator susceptible to domestic violence or sexual aggression. It won't affect their pensions or ability to continue living off the Canadian taxpayer, who contribute nearly $6 into a gold-plated pension plan for every dollar contributed by members of Parliament and senators.

Brazeau's trial related to his Senate expenses is set for March 29, 2016. In his comeback statement Brazeau promises to sit as an independent senator representing Aboriginal Peoples. Every Aboriginal person in Canada is no doubt overjoyed at the prospect.

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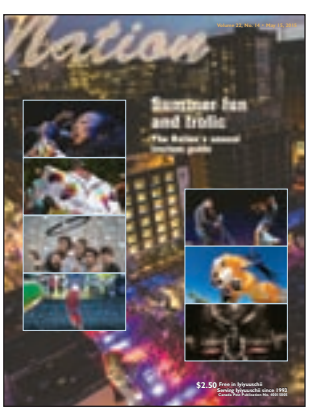

Goose Break games

by Sonny Orr

Another plane takes off with another family heading for their spring goose break. The Twin Otter's engines drone on and quickly fade away as the plane heads for the Northern Quebec interior.

The town is quiet. At the local store, I bump into a grumpy person, asking me not to write about this years' goose hunt and I agree with him. There are plenty of stories all over Facebook, including one about a 10-car police raid on unsuspecting Crees hunting in cornfields near Ottawa. This raid caught my attention for a while, but since the police in that area were nervous about anyone using guns near the nation's capital in the aftermath of last fall's shooting on Parliament Hill that brought this country to its knees, it was bound to happen sooner or later. Mistakes happen.

The Ottawa Senators lost their battle against their longtime rivals, les Canadiens and I suspect some Ottawa senators who work on the Hill may suffer a similar defeat in the legal arena. Playing dirty is only fair game in hockey when the whole country watches your every move and penalties are doled out by the referees, satisfying fans and pacifying the need for retaliation. They should have referees in Parliament, handing out penalties to those who cheat in the game of democracy. I think, though, that rookie politicians should understand the rules of the game before they play the game. So much time wouldn't be wasted on whistling down infractions, while and time could be spent on good sportsmanship and fair play.

The spring goose break is also the time when the annual audit is conducted in all the communities, when it is almost impossible to contact anyone for comment or verification. As a result, many questions go unanswered and are usually forgotten by the time the statements are ready for review by the communities' members. The deadline is July and the pressure is on to get the statements approved so that future funding is not jeopardized. In the past, it was not uncommon for statements to be ready only the following year and funding was pretty well automatic. Not today. Perhaps this will one day be part of the training because we need referees to watch our every move when it comes to politics and money so that the game of community governance can be played fairly.

In our communities' local governance, there are no referees to make sure that nasty players are fined or penalized. In fact, it is up to us to watch the game being played. In order to do that, you have to be tuned into that channel. Once you do, you may discover the WIIFM radio station to follow the play-by-play. No, it's not the Nintendo network but rather the "What's In It For Me" station.

Perhaps we should tune into the honest politician channel, which could be modeled after CPAC. This way, we will be able to see who's actually at work and whose seats are consistently empty. It could be a good companion to regional radio broadcasts of the council board meetings that only let us hear what is going on but doesn't allow us to verify if our representatives are actually there, representing us. I guess live streaming of these events is the only way to go. This way, we can be confident that our leaders and representatives are actually on the job.

As for my grumpy friend at the store who is tired of reading my stuff, perhaps he would be happier if there really was good coverage of what goes on during goose break when the auditors are doing their work. Then we could judge whether any penalties should be imposed on our political players.

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Wrongful Arrest

Cree hunters subject to a 'high-risk take down' outside of Ottawa

by Jesse Staniforth

When Wayne Rabbitskin headed south from his home in Chibougamou, he figured that he was going to have some adventures on his trip to Las Vegas. He didn't expect that the real adventure was going to take place on the road outside of Ottawa.

But around 10 am on Saturday, May 2, Rabbitskin – along with his friend John-Henry Wapachee, his two cousins Samuel and Smalley Rabbitskin, and Smalley's two sons – were pulled over by the Ottawa Police in their trucks and arrested at gunpoint in what the Ottawa Sun called a "high-risk takedown."

Rabbitskin and his group had been hunting on private property outside of Ottawa. They had a letter from the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nation welcoming them onto Algonquin land, and had obtained a farmer's permission to hunt in his fields.

"He gave us permission before, but we told him that we'd be coming around just to confirm with him that everything was okay," Rabbitskin explained. "He said the geese were a nuisance. When they put the seeds down, the geese eat them – you can see patches where corn isn't growing. They told us we could hunt in the area where they hadn't already put the seeds down. He said he was sure the neighbours would be ok with it – he talked with another farmer, and that guy said it was okay too."

It had been a pretty good week so far. Rabbitskin, who's originally from Chisasibi but lives in Chibougamou and works in Oujé-Bougoumou, headed south on April 23. He got two days of hunting in before flying to Las Vegas for five days' vacation. After returning April 30, he decided to get in another two days on the land. They were out before 6 am, and by 10 am they'd shot 18 geese.

"We were going to clean the geese and come back," said Rabbitskin. "As we were going out of the field, that's when we saw the police vehicle. I've gone hunting for four years there, and we'd never seen them around. I had a feeling it was for us. He waved at us, at first. We were scouting an area and we stopped. We parked by the side of the road, and that's when he came again. This time he stopped and asked us some questions: 'How's the hunting?' It's pretty good, we told him. 'Where are you guys from?' We told him we were James Bay Crees. He asked us if we had permission to hunt, and we told him yeah, we did."

While they were stopped, the police officer ran the plates and discovered that Rabbitskin's cousin's truck was reported stolen. According to Rabbitskin, this dated back a year to when the truck had actually been stolen, and was later recovered – but the EEPF had never updated it to show that it was no longer a wanted vehicle.

"They followed us, and he called backup, because there were six of us, and we had guns. So this was Grand Theft Auto, from their perspective! Indians with guns and a stolen vehicle!" Rabbitskin laughs. But what happened next was serious: as the group drove home they noticed more and more police cars nearby, and suddenly each truck was pulled over. Heavily armed police ordered all occupants out of their vehicles.

"There were five or six cars," Rabbitskin said. "They came running out with fully automatic weapons and body armour. They did the whole procedure: 'Put your hands on the wheel, put your hands in the air, get down on your knees and put your hands behind your head.' They handcuffed all six of us."

An officer explained that they had received a complaint that someone was shooting on private property. Over the radio he heard the police calling the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, who told them they had his group had right to be hunting geese.

"It sounded like they didn't have that information, that's what I was sensing," he said. "They didn't know that Crees were allowed to hunt. And when they realized the owner of the truck was actually the driver, they knew they'd made a mistake. Plus they'd blocked up the highway too – with a whole bunch of vehicles."

The Ottawa Police apologized to Rabbitskin and his party, and he said he understood they were just doing their jobs. However, he worried that the experience of having automatic rifles pointed at them would be traumatizing for the youths in his group.

"I talked to them after but they said everything was fine," he reported. "They were almost getting a kick out of it." The group was even able to get back in time to clean their geese before the heat ruined the meat.

Rabbitskin laughed about the day's events after the fact. However, he said he had a long time to reflect during his drive home on the tragic end that came to the five hunters who perished in the Lake Bussy fire in early April.

"We could have been another tragic story," he said, "And I'm just glad it didn't escalate into something worse. I'm thankful."

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Chibougamau protest targets logging abuses

by Joshua Grant

Residents of Mistissini and Nemaska residents gathered in Chibougamau recently to protest forestry abuses in their territories, taking advantage of a visit from Natural Resources Minister Laurent Lessard to register their disgust over clear cutting and other practices by forestry companies. The protesters also hoped to bring attention to the repeated breaches of the Baril-Moses agreement in James Bay Cree territory.

Jimmy and Kathleen Gunner, Isaac Voyager, Youth Chief Joshua Iserhoff and Nemaska Chief Thomas Jolly managed to secure an impromptu meeting with Minister Lessard to deliver a message that Cree rights must be respected.

They stressed that there continue to be major breaches of the Baril-Moses agreement. The agreement was between former Grand Chief Ted Moses and then-Natural Resources Minister Gilles Baril in 2002 during side negotiations to the Paix des Braves. It mandates logging practices such as mosaic cutting and a minimum forest cover.

In May 2014, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come spoke of the crucial need for responsible forestry practices and the intrinsic role the Cree Nation and the people of Eeyou Istchee play as stewards of the land. He stated that the agreements and treaties in place are there to benefit all residents of the province of Quebec.

Coon Come also said that the "Adapted Forestry Regime" established in Chapter 3 of the Paix des Braves calls "for the protection of residual forest cover in Cree traplines that have already been logged, the protection of forests adjacent to watercourses and lakes and the regulation of the road access network."

photos courtesy Joshua Isherhoff

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Grand Council issues logging ultimatum

The Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec is demanding a halt to logging by Resolute Forest Products (RFP) in Cree territory. A formal notice was issued to the company, escalating a dispute over Cree rights and agreements concerning forestry in Eeyou Istchee.

The step highlights the difficult negotiations between RFP and Aboriginal peoples, despite the nomination of former Premier Lucien Bouchard as special mediator earlier this year.

"We expect to have an injunction, said Resolute Forest Products CEO Richard Garneau. "If that happens jobs could be at risk."

The timber supply in dispute represents around 400,000 cubic metres per year, and is used to supply sawmills in Girardville and Saint-Thomas-Didyme. The loss of these supplies will have some impact at both sites.

"It will probably become uneconomic to operate both. It may be necessary to sacrifice one of the two sawmills," said Garneau.

Ongoing negotiations with the Cree are intended to allow RFP to recover its Forest Stewardship Council certification, which is necessary to sell in markets around the world. The Cree position was a central element in the FSC's decision to suspend the certification.

Cheezo wins Eastmain election

The Eastmain runoff election on April 8 resulted in a change in leadership in the coastal community. Kenneth Cheezo received 189 votes (60%) of the 313 that were cast, while incumbent Chief Johnny Tomatuk garnered 121.

In the first round of voting March 23, Tomatuk led Cheezo by a mere 6%, claiming 99 ballots to Cheezo's 79, and the vote was rounded out by four other candidates: Stanley Gilpin, Kenneth Gilpin, Edward Gilpin and Adrian Cheezo.

In the race for deputy, Emily Whiskeychan maintained her majority of the vote over Gregory Mayappo, taking home 170 of 313 ballots to Mayappo's 142.

Emily Whiskeychan and Rusty Cheezo were voted in as Board of Compensation representatives, Kenneth Gilpin was elected as Cree Nation Governance Representative and Daniel Mark-Stewart, Raymond Shanush and Graham Cheezo selected as Eastmain's band councillors.

Ottawa announces disaster funding

The Harper government announced federal assistance May 5 to help Quebec's First Nations deal with forest fires and flooding in their territories. Ottawa said it is investing $288,500 to help prepare First Nations communities for natural disasters.

However, none of the funding will be provided directly to First Nations communities, nor will it pay for actual action when fires or flooding occur.

The funds will be divided among several emergency management initiatives, including: Canadian Red Cross training programs in French and English on evacuations and services to those affected by emergencies; training on the Incident Command System and running an Emergency Operations Centre; Université du Québec à Chicoutimi (CESAM) training on risk management and emergency planning for First Nations; forest fire risk assessment and forest fire suppression training from Société de protection des forêts contre le feu (SOPFEU); and, development by Campus Notre-Dame de Foy of a basic course on emergency operations centres and an exercise plan for those in charge of community emergency management.

According to Quebec Canadian Red Cross Director General Michel Léveillé, "Many First Nations communities living in remote northern regions have to cope with risks such as forest fires and floods each year. We know that community members are better able to handle emergencies when they are prepared."

AFTER A LONG HIBERNATION, I CAN NEVER SEEM TO GET MY SPRING STARTED UNTIL MY THIRD CUP OF COFFEE.
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Summer fun and frolic

The Nation's annual tourism guide

by Amy German

As many families rejoice the arrival of spring, wipe the goose fat from their lips and relax as a clan in celebration of warmer times to come, it's time to start planning your summer fun.

Whether it is a road trip with the whole family that includes some educational time for the kids or an itinerary of fishing festivals, read on!

We sought out the best of festivals, summer fun and special events. So, whether you want to rock it out, stir it up, jump on in or unwind to the max, we have all of the insider tips.

Starting out with Quebec's biggest and brightest hot spot, here is an overview of what Montreal has to offer when it comes to festival festivities and some of the most sizzling events of the summer!

Late May

Museums Day

Come late May, Montreal's magnificence is in full springtime splendour, making it the absolute perfect time to tour the city's many museum marvels.

Now in its 28th edition, Montreal Museums Day happens Sunday, May 24, giving the public access to as many museums as they can do in one day, all for free. Participants can either go at it on their own, visiting wherever they want at their own accord or hop on one of the many different pre planned routes that feature free transportation.

To plan out your museum tour or to get more information, go to: www.museesmontreal.org

Bike Fest

Also known as Go vélo, the Go Bike Montréal Festival is all about all of the fun you can have on two wheels.

This cycling festival has become a seasonal staple for Montrealers and tourists. Running May 24-31, this very physical festival brings about an entire week of bike tours, culminating in the annual Tour de l'Île de Montréal.

www.veloquebec.info/en

Classical music competition

Running May 25-31, the Montreal International Music Competition brings out classical musical masters to compete in an American Idol-style contest.

Focusing on a different field of music every year, the 2015 event will focus on voice and feature 24 world-class singers that include 10 Canadians and four Quebecers.

concoursmontreal.ca/en/

Alternative Arts

In the avant garde arts scene, the OFFTA live arts festival presents strong and singular approaches to art with lots of experimentation. This high art festival helps artists exchange with each other to learn, grow and create. With events happening at various theatres throughout Montreal, this festival runs from May 27-June 4. Find out more at www.offta.com

Now celebrating its sweet 16th edition, MUTEK, Montreal's festival of electronic music and digital creativity, is back for five nonstop days and nights May 27 to 31 at Montréal's Musée d'art contemporain (MAC).

The lineup includes: Andy Stott, Atom & Robin Fox present Double Vision, Boundary, Cobblestone Jazz, DBX, James Holden, John Tejada, Kiasmos, Lucy, Millie & Andrea, P. Trafford, Pole & MFO, Richard Devine, Rigal Consoles, RROSE, Session Victim, Sherwood & Pinch, Steffi, Strategy and more.

www.mutek.org/

June

Fringe Festival

Kicking off the month with an explosion of theatrical fun, the St-Ambroise Montreal Fringe Festival runs June 1-21.

A major event with a home-spun feel, the Fringe brings acts and artists in from all over the world for alternative theatre and performances. Using a wide variety of makeshift and conventional theatres as well as an outdoor venue where patrons can often meet the performers, the fringe is a unique festival where patrons can get up close and personal with their entertainment.

Featuring hundreds of shows and performances, all at accessible prices, find out more at:

montrealfringe.ca

Suoni Per Il Popolo

While Montreal may be on the map internationally for its huge summer festivals, there are all kinds of smaller events such as Suoni Per Il Popolo. Running June 4-22, this festival also features a wide variety of less mainstream genres of free jazz, hip hop, noise, world/global, electronica, soundscapes, experimental folk, rock and pop, and musique actuelle.

suoniperilpopolo.org

Grand Prix

For glamour and luxury, there is no better event to get your party on than Montreal's Grand Prix and Grand Prix festivities, which run June 5-7.

With the main event going down on Sunday, June 7 at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, the whole city gets in on the fun with street festivals downtown, high-end car displays and special events in restaurants and bars throughout the city.

www.grandprixmontreal.com

North America's only Grand Prix is back

Éric Lapointe performs at Les Francofolies and at H20 in Amos

Grain de Ciel

A new event to the city, the folks behind Cirque du Soleil at Le Tohu are offering the "Grain de Ciel" kite theatre festival June 6 and 7.

Filling the skies about the TOHU and Saint-Michel Environmental Complex, kite professionals from all over Europe, Canada and United States will be bringing their A-game to put on a one of a kind show.

Also featuring creation workshops, demonstrations and guided tours, to find out more about this special event, go to:

tohu.ca/en/season/event/2014-2015/grain-de-ciel

Beer Fest

Featuring beer and other artisanal alcoholic products from around the world, the Montreal Beer Festival or Mondial de la bière is now in its 22 edition and runs June 10-14 at the Palais des Congrès.

Whether you are looking to sample new products or discover what pairs best with a menu item, this is the event to hit to discover and savour.

Food trucks and kiosk tents also line the exterior of Palais des Congrès along l'Esplanade at an accompanying outdoor event and extravaganza.

festivalmondialbiere.qc.ca

Les Francofolies

The world's biggest celebration of French-language music, Les Francofolies runs June 11-20.

The first big festival of the summer, this SPECTRA event hits the Place des Festivals with free outdoor shows and some spectacular indoor events that sometimes end up being moments of a lifetime.

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Montreal Mural Festival is breathtaking

Serving up the best of Franco pop, rock, folk, hip hop, jazz, world music, musical theatre and other varieties of French performance art, this event is one of Montreal's crowning glories.

Some of this year's headliners include: Alexandre Désilets, B.A.G.A.R.R.E, Baden Baden, Daniel Lavoie, DJ James, DJ Pone, Dumas, École nationale de la chanson, Éric Goulet, Éric Lapointe, , Fanny Bloom, Geneviève, Racette, Isabelle Boulay, Jacques Michel, Jérôme Minière, Kevin Parent, Marie-Jo Thério, Marie-Pierre Arthur, Marie-Thérèse Fortin, Martha Wainwright, Mononc' Serge, Nach, Nathy Tüco, Patrice Michaud, Paul Piché, Philémon Cimon, Philippe Brach, Pierre Lapointe, Salomé Leclerc, Saye, Selim, Souldia, Stéphane Archambault, Stéphanie Lapointe, Sylvie Moreau, Le Vent du Nord and Yves Desrosier.

www.francofolies.com

Mural Festival

The Montreal Mural Festival is a public art showcase that celebrates some of the incredible murals that Montreal has to offer and sees the creation of new ones.

Running for 11 days and featuring 50 murals, this breathtaking festival has a lot to offer. Happening from June 12-15, find out more at:

muralfestival.com

Folk Festival

The Montreal Folk Festival on the Canal has been gaining steam over the past few years, developing a big following and attracting bigger names.

Running June 17-21, this year's event will showcase the following acts: The Echo Hunters, Alex Cuba, Amos the Transparent, Charles-Antoine Gosselin, Who Are You, Vishtèn, Kandle and the Krooks, Bruce Cockburn, Life in Winter, The Bombadils, Jesse, Basia Bulat, Miracles, The Slocan Ramblers, Olivier Brousseau, Sarah Jane Scouten, Peter Katz, Bon Débarras and Jim Bryson.

montrealfolkfest.com

National Aboriginal Day

Put on by the people behind Montreal First People's Festival, National Aboriginal Day is marked in Montreal with a special ceremony in the city's Old Port in celebration of the solstice on June 21.

Featuring Native drummers, traditional dancing and signing, tradi-

National Aboriginal Day

Samian & Dj Horg

Guy Bélanger

Florent Vollant

performes the very first show of his new album Puamuna

Aboriginal Artisants on site!
Come join the celebration at the Friendship Centre
1272, 7th street, Val-d'Or
Bring your chairs

SUNDAY June 21 - 7:30 p.m.

Free outdoor show for all !
Be part of the celebration!

Traditional opening

Minopijak! / Welcome!

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Centre d'amitié autochtone de Val-d'Or

Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre

tional garb from a variety of Nations throughout Quebec, art and much more, this is a wonderful opportunity for Montrealers and tourists to celebrate Native culture.

Check back to www.nativelynx.qc.ca for more details as they emerge later this spring.

Jazz Fest

One of the most anticipated events of the year, the Montreal International Jazz Festival brings some of the biggest names in jazz to indoor and outdoor stages for the granddaddy of Montreal's festival circuit.

Running June 26-July 5, this year's indoor calendar includes: Wayne Shorter, Huey Lewis and the News, Al Di Meola, Erykah Badu, Jamie Cullum, Lucinda Williams, Jessie Cook, Mika, Taj Mahal-John Mayall-James Cotton, Vic Vogel, Lo Esencial by Luis de la Carrasca, Bobby Bazini with special guest Booker T. Jones, The Mavericks, Justin Townes, the Stanley Clark Band, John Scofield, Bill Stewart and Larry Grenadier, Jesse Cook and a special Battle of the Bands between the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra and the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra. More names will be announced in coming weeks.

With hundreds of musical events on all kinds of stages, the Jazz fest offers once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to see legendary artists perform.

www.montrealjazzfest.com

July

Fireworks competition

L'International des Feux Loto-Québec, also known as the Montreal International Fireworks Competition, adds whizz, bang and pow to your hot summer nights.

This Montreal tradition brings out some of the world's best pyrotechnical experts. This year's event will see England, Italy, Canada, China & Hong Kong, the US and France teams, with some special performances to celebrate some special events such as Canada Day. Running Wednesday and Saturday nights throughout the month of July, to purchase tickets to see it from La Ronde or find out more about this event, go to:

www.sixflags.com/larondeen/linternational-des-feux/overview

Circus arts

While Montreal may be known for its smoked meat, poutine, hockey and extreme weather, on a global level the city is also renowned for its phenomenal circus scene as it has some of the best circus schools in the world. So a festival celebrating this talent, The TOHU International Festival of Circus Arts, makes sense.

Running July 2-12, this fest features acts that only the human body can perform, bringing together some of the most incredible acrobatic, dance, stunt and performance art artists in the world.

montrealcirquefest.com

Comiccon

Reinventing itself as a summertime sizzler, the Montreal Comiccon will

Booker T. Jones is at the Jazz Fest

Montreal is renowned for its phenomenal circus scene

happen July 3-5 at Palais des Congres and will give comic book, sci-fi, cosplay, gaming, anime, horror and movie fans alike the chance to show off their gear, buy some goods and meet their biggest heroes.

Featuring names like Giancarlo Esposito, J. August Richards, Jason Momoa, Jeffrey Combs, Jewel Staite, John Barrowman, Josh McDermitt, Ron Perlman and Sean Gunn to name a few, check out the full lineup at:

www.montrealcomiccon.com

Beat festival

For those who move to the beats, the 14th Festival International de Percussions runs July 3-12 in the Quays of the Old Port and nearby Marche Bonsecours. This unique festival is a celebration of various disciplines such as music, dance, photography, documentaries, gastronomy, workshops, visual arts and exhibitions.

This event will kick off with the "la Guinguette," a dance party with a French folk theme that will feature "swing and French Bal Musette." Combining gourmet delights and French culture, this is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about percussion from France and participate in its folk traditions.

www.percussions.ca

Montreal Comiccon will happen July 3-5

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Carifiesta

One of the most colourful events of the year, Montreal's Carifiesta is now in its 40th year of bringing Caribbean culture to Montreal's streets in sizzling style.

Saturday, July 4 is the day to see this moving carnival of songs, beats, traditional dances, and incredible costumes. While this "Jump Up" may be a fabulous party, one of its bigger goals is inclusiveness and educating the public about Caribbean culture.

www.carifiesta.com

Nuits d'Afrique

Festival international Nuits d'Afrique celebrates the many forms of art that have either come directly from Africa or of those with African roots.

Featuring over 100 shows, performances, dance events and cultural displays, the 29th edition of this festival will run July 7-19 and usually has a few special days set up in the Quartier des Spectacles.

www.festivalnuitsdafrique.com

Just For Laughs

Running from July 8-28, the Just for Laughs Festival brings the funniest people in the world to Montreal. This year's headliners will include megawatt names like Mike Myers, Dave Chappelle, Neil Patrick Harris, Trevor Noah, Jayne Lynch and Ellie Kemper.

To buy tickets or see the complete listings go to: www.hahaha.com/en

Kahnawake Powwow

This celebration of Mohawk culture draws tourists from all over the worldand is a cherished favourite for those on the powwow trail.

Running July 11-12, the Echoes of a Proud Nation Powwow is also one of the largest merchant powwows of its kind, with vendors from across the country.

kahnawakepowwow.com

Fantasia

Celebrating some of the best in Asian film, the Fantasia Festival also showcases independent and lesser-known films from the US, Europe and around the world.

It's an opportunity to screen old cult classics while taking in a competitive film festival – and to beat the mid-summer heat. Fantasia runs July 17 - August 7.

www.festivalfantasia.com

Electronica

Now in its 17th edition, the Montreal Electronic Groove Festival showcases some of the hottest electronic acts on the local scene while also bringing in incredible acts from abroad. Running July 24-August 2, announced headliners include: Darius, MYD, DJ Slow and Fonkynson. While the full lineup has yet to be released, more information can be found at:

www.megmontreal.com

Dragon Boats

Transforming from what was once a Chinese cultural celebration to an athletic endurance event, the Montreal Dragon Boat Challenge is hosted by H2O Playground in the Montreal's Olympic Basin. This year's challenge will host teams from the United States, Ontario and the Maritimes.

Howie Miller is at Just For Laughs

This July 25-26 event is actually the is the second leg of the triple crown event, sanctioned by Dragon Boat Canada and will serve as an official qualifying round for the Canadian championship.

h2oplayground.com

Land InSights

Bringing Indigenous culture to downtown Montreal July 29-August 5, the Presence Autochtone/ Terre en Vue/Land InSights Aboriginal Festival showcases local and foreign Indigenous culture and celebrates the art they produce.

Celebrate Mohawk culture at the Kahnawake Powwow

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22 8AM ▸ GOLDEX | 1PM ▸ SELEINE | 6:30PM ▸ NIOBEC
23 8AM ▸ RAGLAN

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SEE YOU THERE!

CSST

While the lineup has yet to be released, this year's event will include the annual film and video competition as well as the live entertainment stage in the Quartier des Spectacles.

Featuring cultural displays, dance events, Indigenous cuisine and so much more, find out more about this festival at:

www.presenceautochtone.ca

August

Osheaga

Osheaga is Montreal's answer to massive indie/alt rock festivals like Coachella, is back on Île Jean-Drapeau August 1-3. Tthis year's lineup include: Action Bronson, Alt-J, Arkells, The Avett Brothers, Bahamas, Ben Harper, The Black Keys, Brodinski, Broods, Caribou, Gary Clark, Jr., The Decemberists, Interpol, The KillsThe Rural Alberta Advantage, A Tribe Called Red, The War on Drugs, Patrick Watson, Weezer and many more.

For information or tickets:

www.osheaga.com/

photo: J. East

A Tribe Called Red plays Osheaga

Highland Games

To celebrate your Scottish heritage or simply take in some local Celtic culture, check out Montreal's Highland Games August 1-3 in Verdun's Parc Arthur Therrien.

Featuring bagpipe and highland dancing competitions as well as all sorts of Celtic sporting events from caber tossing to sheaf toss, putting the stone, the hammer toss and the like, this family-friendly event also features plenty of Celtic fare to sample and sip.

With special attractions like bouncy castles and face painting for the little ones, this is a wonderful way to explore all things Scottish.

montrealhighlandgames.qc.ca

Nadal will be at the Roger's Cup

Blues Fest

Festiblues gives blues music a spotlight to showcase its diverse stars August 6-9.

While it is still too early to get a peek at this year's lineup, this Montreal North event brings some big names to town and features a series of night club events for those that want to get that swanky, sometimes skanky blues experience.

Check back later this summer at www.festiblues.comto see who will be featured at this year's event.

Roger's Cup

For tennis fans, the best time of the year to be in Montreal this summer is August 7-16 for the annual Roger's Cup. Bringing the likes of Nadal, Federer and Murray, Montreal will be presenting the men's event this year at Uniprix Stadium in Jarry Park, alternating annually with Toronto for the men's and women's events.

www.rogerscup.com

Heavy Montréal

Heavy metal fans get will flash their devil fingers August 7-9 at Parc Jean-Drapeau with three solid days of top hard rock, metal, punk and other hardcore acts at Heavy Montréal.

Also featuring wrestling, food trucks and other side attractions, heavy music fans can either purchase a one-day ticket for the event or a pass for all three days.

This year's lineup includes: Korn, Faith No More, Slipknot, Iggy Pop, NOFX, Billy Talent, Lamb of God, Bullet for my Valentine, Alexisonfire, Mastoon, Meshuggah, Lagwagon and Montreal's very own Slaves on Dope as well as many others.

heavymontreal.com

Italian week

Featuring opera singers, designer cars, fashion shows and all sorts of other Italian performers, Montreal's Italian Week happens in Little Italy every August and will be busting out the fine desserts, pasta, pizza and fun August 7-16.

italianweek.ca

Otakuthon

For those whose passion is Anime, particularly when it comes to cosplay (dressing up as your favourite Anime or comic book character,) no event is bigger and better than Otakuthon.

Running August 7-9 at Palais de Congres, this event features offers everything from karaoke to human chess to dance parties geared to those in costume.

Also featuring anime screenings, competitions, gaming events, shopping and trading opportunities, this is the event for serious fans.

www.otakuthon.com

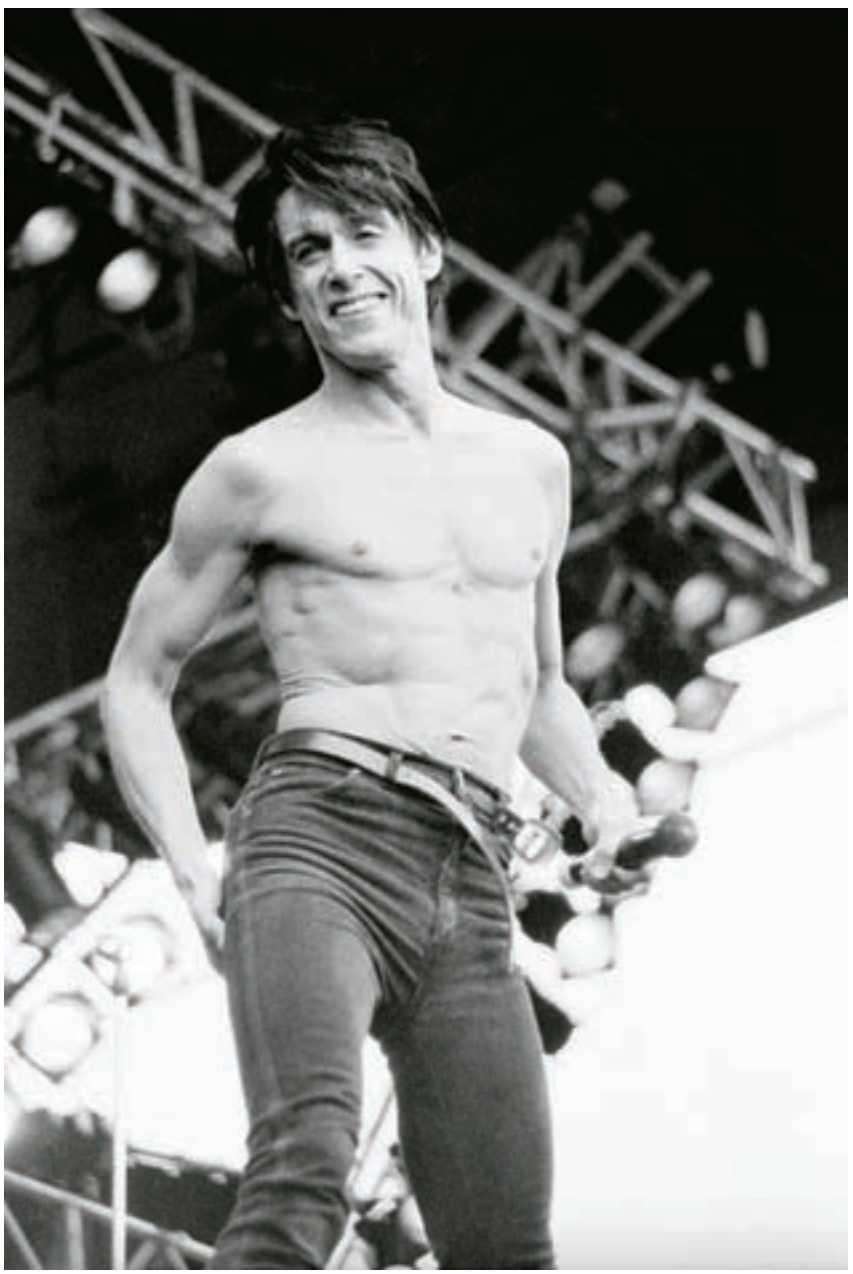

photo: Yves Lorson

Iggy Pop in 1987

Tango

If you have ever wanted to try your hand (or feet) at the tango or simply take in others who have mastered this fine dance form, the Montreal International Tango Festival is the ultimate event.

Featuring an elaborate programming that includes Argentine tango masters, dancers and musicians, this event offers master classes, concerts, shows and dancing evenings, also known as milongas.

With 50 classes, 10 dancers, six milongas, four shows and two orchestras, this festival runs August 11-16 and is guaranteed to at least get your toes tapping.

www.fitm.ca

Reggae

Lovers of reggae can rejoice August 14-16 at the 12th Montreal International Reggae Festival. Featuring mellow and musical fun under the sun and stars in the Quays of the Old Port of Montreal, check back at montrealinternationalreggaefestival.com to see this year's lineup.

Japan Fest

Those looking to gain a better understanding of Japan can do so at Matsuri Japon, a special one day festival devoted to Japanese culture. Featuring Japanese food, clothing and folk dancing, this event happens

August 15 at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre of Montreal.

www.festivaljapon.com

Pride

Featuring the biggest parade of the year, Montreal's Gay Pride festivities are world-renowned as one of the biggest and diverse parties of the year. Running August 10-16, Pride Week features a variety of activities geared at not only celebrating the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans communities but their history, culture and art. With museum events, family events, free shows and other forms of entertainment, the week culminates in the Pride Parade Sunday, August 16.

www.fiertemontrealpride.com

Fashion and Design

If fashion and design are your passion, Montreal celebrates this world August 17-22 at the Montreal Fashion and Design Festival at Place des Festivals. Featuring fashion shows and design events, models will sashay down catwalks amid a flurry of paparazzi.

Blending mediums, the event also brings together leading international fashion labels, renowned national designers, cutting-edge shows, design in real time, and all sorts of pop up shops for those looking to expand their wardrobe.

festivalmodedesign.com

Revisit "old" Montreal

To see history come to life, the 18th Century Public Market put on by the Old Port's Pointe-à-Callière Archeology Museum is a fabulous way to revisit the past while enjoying a unique shopping experience.

With stalls selling everything from market vegetables to handmade goods like candles and confections, visitors can sit down for a beverage and take in musicians playing music from that era or the cultural animations that tell the story of this historic experience.

A learning experience for the whole family August 22-23, to find out more go to: pacmusee.qc.ca/

World Film Fest

Celebrating excellence in cinema, the Montreal World Film Festival hits screens August 27- September 7. This is often the only time and place to see some of the works of cinematic art showcased at the festival. Many big name Hollywood films have opened here in the past.

www.ffm-montreal.org

Summer in the sticks

Festival Fun outside Montreal

Behind the mask

If you've ever wanted to hide behind a mask, the Eastern Townships community of Saint-Camille hosts a special event devoted to masks May 28-June 7.

Featuring a wide variety of performances that include dance, theatre and giant puppets as well as exhibits, workshops, conferences a parade.

masqalors.ca

Gatineau beer

With a philosophy of drinking less but better, the Gatineau Beer Festival is back with 300-plus beers from over 30 brewers for about 40,000 visitors May 29-31 in Gatineau's Parc Jacques Cartier.

Now in its 4th edition, Festibiere is the regional event to kick off the warm weather good times. Featuring tasty treats, live entertainment and of course, lots and lots of beer.

www.festibieredegatineau.ca

Rouyn-Noranda beer

Can't make it to the Gatineau Beer fest but still want to hit a stellar beer festival? Inits first edition ever, Festibiere will host a special event in Rouyn Noranda this summer. Also featuring over 300 beers from over 30 brewers, this event will be happen June 5-7 at Presqu'Île du Lac Osisko.

festibiere.ca/fr/rouyn/

Trois-Rivières dance

An International dance event in the heart of Trois-Rivières, the Festival International DansEncore brings international dance acts in an explosion of colour and movement.

Featuring shows, parties, master classes for dancers, loads of free entertainment and fun, this event is now in its 21st edition and will go down June 4-7 in Trois-Rivières.

www.dansencore.ca

Slayer will perform at the Amnesia Rock Festival

Free fishing

A special event for those just dying to get their fish on, the Fête de la pêche (The Fishing Festival) is back from June 5-7 for those who want to drop their line anywhere in the province without the need of a permit.

If you've ever dreamed of fishing elsewhere in Quebec, this is the opportunity to plan a trip anywhere you would like to cast your line and possibly discover a new spot to fall in love with.

www.fetedelapeche.gouv.qc.ca

Saint-Honoré kite fest

The Saint-Honoré dans l'Vent three-day kite festival takes off June 12 to fill the skies of Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean with some spectacular kites.

Bringing in professional kite fliers from around the world, this event features fun for the very small and the very tall, with children's activities such as bouncy castles and other attractions as well as live entertainment.

Also featuring baby stations for feedings and changes, various locations to buy snacks and even a set up for trailers if you would like to come and stay a few days, this warm and welcoming event is all about creating those very special family memories.

www.sthonoredanslvent.com

Saguenay arts

Whether you are an artist or a fan of fine arts, the Symposium international de peinture et sculpture du Saguenay Lac-St-Jean is a wonderful event to create or watch others create. Running June 17-21, this event will host 35 artists from the region and around the world.

symposiumsaguenay.com

Amnesia rock fest

Now featuring a mind-blowing lineup, the Amnesia Rock Festival has Montebello on the map when it comes to the crème of the crop in rock fests.

Running from June 18-21, this year's event will feature: System of a Down, Refused, Skinny Puppy, and Thrice, and full album performances from Rancid, Deftones, The Offspring, Linkin Park, Slayer, Tenacious D, Rob Zombie, Pixies, Snoop Dogg, Bad Religion, Coheed and Cambria, Flogging Molly, Ministry, Buzzcocks, Descendents, Sublime with Rome, Gogol Bordello, Melvins, Goldfinger, Atreyu, and Fear Factory.

Now featuring comedy, Tom Green and Steve-O of Jackass have both been announced as headliners.

www.amnesiarockfest.com

Cheesy fun

If you love cheese there is no better place than the Victoriaville Cheese Festival in the heart of Quebec's dairy region.

Running June 18-21, showcases Quebec's finest cheeses. More than 100 varieties can be sampled while you discover other local products, cheese

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pairing events, workshops. There are also cheese making and circus entertainers for the kiddies.

www.festivaldesfromages.qc.ca

James Bay walleye derby

Kicking off festival season in the north, the James Bay Walleye Fishing Tournament is a favourite among Crees as it has become the fabric of so many fishing tales and many dinners.

Running June 18-27, the 16th edition will feature over $140,000 in cash and prizes, loads of entertainment and fun for the whole family.

Among this year's performers are John Boudrias, the Luc Boulianne Country Band, Mari-Lou Boutin, DJ BLAAS and Renee Wilkin. There will also be a Texas Hold'em tournament and a bingo night.

To register for the event or get more information:

www.festivaldudore.com

Chibougamau carnival

A cherished favourite for generations of families, the Beauce Carnival will be in Chibougamau June 25-28 for those that want to take the kiddies out to celebrate the end of the school year! With carnival rides, a midway and all sorts of fun and entertainment.

www.beaucecarnaval.com

Lumberjack competition

For those looking to show off their logging skills, the Festival forestier de Senneterre is back June 19-21 with both both professional and amateur lumberjack events.

Now in its 21st edition, this year's event will feature a wide variety of competitions and big prizes as well as nightly entertainment that will include a night of fireworks and local acts like: Lipstick Rodeo, Lubik and the Tribute Master Tour.

festivalforestier.ca

Trout derby

Quebec's biggest fishing tournament, the Festival de la truite mouchetée, is

Summer fun at Amos's H2O

a competitive trout fishers dream. Picturesque Saint-Alexis-des-Monts in the Mauricie hosts this special week-long event, playing host to fishermen (and women) from throughout Quebec and beyond.

Running June 20-28, this event also features live entertainment to keep the nights rocking and loads of family activities for those who aren't in the boat.

festivaldelatruitemouchetee.com

Trois-Rivières in song

A special festival that is all about the human voice, the Le FestiVoix de Trois-Rivières brings big names to the region.

Running June 26-July 5, this year's headliners include: Les Cowboys Fringants, Bobby Bazini, Eric Lapointe, Zachary Richard and Patrick Watson.

www.festivoix.com

Northern jokers

If you are looking for laughs in Quebec's North, look no further than the Festival d'humour de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue, running July 1-5.

Bringing in comics and acts from across Quebec and beyond, this year's event will also include Turtle Island's own Howie Miller.

With improv, galas and special events, check www.festivaldhumour.com for the whole schedule when it becomes available.

Tremblant Blues

If you were planning on taking the family on a Mont Tremblant vacation this summer to take in a couple of rounds of golf and other family fun, why not check out Tremblant's hottest event of the summer: the Tremblant International Blues Festival.

Running July 3-12, this year's headliners include Ben Racine Band, France D'Amour, Les Porn Flakes, Pimps of Joytime, Dawn Tyler Watson and Paul Deslauriers, Carlos Del Junco & Jimmy Bowskill, Jimmy James, Ronnie Baker Brooks, Bobby Bazini, Jim Zeller, Steve Hill and Brian Tyler.

tremblantblues.com

Drummondville folk dance

Celebrating 34 years of fantastic folk dance performances, Le Mondial des Cultures de Drummondville is back once again July 9-19 with hundreds of dancers from dozens of countries to entertain thousands of fans.

Featuring acts from Austria, Brazil, Columbia, Croatia, Scotland, Finland, Greece, India, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Taiwan and throughout Canada, this event combines the dances of ancient worlds with modern staging, lighting and presentation.

www.mondialdescultures.com

Water sports

A festival that is all watery fun, Amos's H2O le festival Coop IGA Extra Amos brings summer fun and nightly entertainment to the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region.

Featuring a marathon, swim races, dragon boat racing, a draw for up to $32,000 in cash and prizes and all sorts of nightly entertainment, this year's event will feature Offenbach, Éric Lapointe, Paul Piché and Custom.

www.h2olefestival.com

Cowboy culture

If you are looking to get your western on, donning some cowboy boots and a Stetson….or just feel like watching a bunch of other people dress up like cowboys, check out the Festival Western Dolbeau-Mistassini.

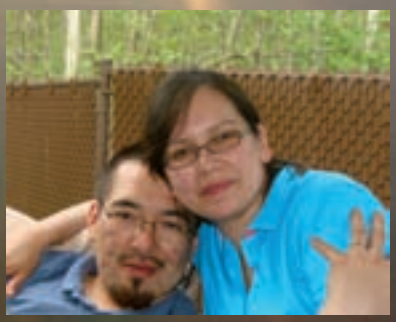
Running July 10-19, this fest has had 44 years to get it right and is the perfect place to celebrate cowboy boots, hats, horses and other elements of the western lifestyle.

With loads of country dancing, shows by country professionals and loads of good old-fashioned country fun, it will be a veritable Hee-haw!

www.festivalwesterndolbeau-mistassini.com

Thank you

No words could ever express our appreciation for the love and support you have shown us after the passing of my husband, Charlie Gunner, the father to our children, Demera, Kobee, Cherysh and Delayna. We are deeply grateful for your generosity, help and support. Although it has been a long, heartbreaking and tiring month, we certainly couldn't have done it without the help all of you have given us



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Lettrage Waldi
Eskan Co.
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Tim Horton's (Anthony and Elaine MacLeod) and the crew
Mistissini Sports & Recreation Department
Annie Mark Blacksmith
Nancy Mattawashish
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Christine Petawabano
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Sandra and Norman Shecapio
Jennellie and Hannah Shecapio
Jane Blacksmith
Mary Voyageur
Cecile Happyjack
Bradley AJ and Angela Georgekish
Theresa Trapper
Emily Happyjack
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Department of Justice and Correctional Services
And many more….

To Mistissini for their love and support and to the Cree Nation for their continuous prayers, and to our family and friends, thank you all!

Although I do not remember the first two days since that fateful day on April 1st; the people that came to our house to show their support, I thank you. To all of you who thought of us and prayed for us during this difficult time of our lives, thank you! Because of your prayers, you gave us energy when we didn't have the strength to face the day.

Your presence at the service was uplifting to our broken spirits. To the people who came from Moosonee and other communities, thank you for being there for us. For taking the time to travel to be with us, thank you!

A special thank you to my dad, Henry, to Bella and to my brothers and sisters and their spouses. Thank you for your help and support. We love you all.

And to my mother, Charlotte, for your never-ending support, love and comfort. You are truly a blessing in our lives. Thank you, mom!

To the Coonishish family and to Jason, thank you for being there when I needed a shoulder to cry on. As you felt the pain in my heart, yet you gave your time for me. Thank you!

To my cousins, Laurie and Janice, may you find peace and comfort by remembering the love and laughter you had with your husbands. They were good men, and were good friends to my husband. Love to you ladies and your children.

To the Loon family, may you find peace and comfort in cherishing Kevin's memory. He was also a good friend of ours. He will be greatly missed by many.

Thank you to the Cree Nation Government for making the calls to speed things up with the coroner; without you, we would still be waiting to put our loved ones to rest. Thank you Grand Chief Matthew Coon-Come.

To my brother and sister-in-law, thank you for being a great sibling to your brother. He was very fond of spending time with all of you. To Jimmy and Kathleen, thank you for giving your son for me to marry. He was a great husband and an awesome father. I miss him deeply and love him with all my heart. He was a great man with a great heart. He was proud to serve the community and a loyal friend to many.

With love,
Rachel B. MacLeod and children

"Then the Conservatives came into power and walked away from the agreement in 2007. And here we are, 10 years later and the community is still facing the same problem."

When the levee breaks… every spring

Report says inadequate Kashechewan dike puts community at risk

by Jeremy East

For many Crees, the spring thaw is associated with warmer weather and the pleasures of goose break. For the residents of Kashechewan First Nation however, the change of season is a time of destructive flooding and a grim annual evacuation.

In late April, the community of 1500 Crees was evacuated for the third consecutive year after ice breakup caused the nearby Albany River to rise. Some residents are now trickling back into the community, but many are asking why the federal government isn't addressing the annual flood problem.

"We had an agreement signed with the federal government in 2005 to move the community to higher ground," said Charlie Angus, the NDP MP for the region. "Then the Conservatives came into power and walked away from the agreement in 2007. And here we are, 10 years later and the community is still facing the same problem."

Angus says the original agreement would have moved Kashechewan to higher ground in one of five areas on the band's territory. The Conservatives however, wanted to move the community outside Timmins, 450 km south of its current location. Residents refused such a drastic exodus from their traditional territory.

When the Conservatives reneged on the deal in 2007, they promised to repair the dike wall intended to protect the community from the powerful Albany River. Angus says the $15 million that has since been spent on the dike is dangerously inadequate. A recent engineering report supports that view.

Experts with engineering firm Hatch Ltd. recently completed a report titled *Assessment of Dam Safety Risks and Dam Safety Management Requirements for the Kashechewan Ring Dike*. It says the deteriorating condition of the dike protecting Kashechewan puts community members at "intolerable risk".

"This is a real warning that the community simply cannot be left where it is on the flood plain," said Angus. "One year that dike wall could give way. And if it does, we'll have a very serious catastrophe on our hands."

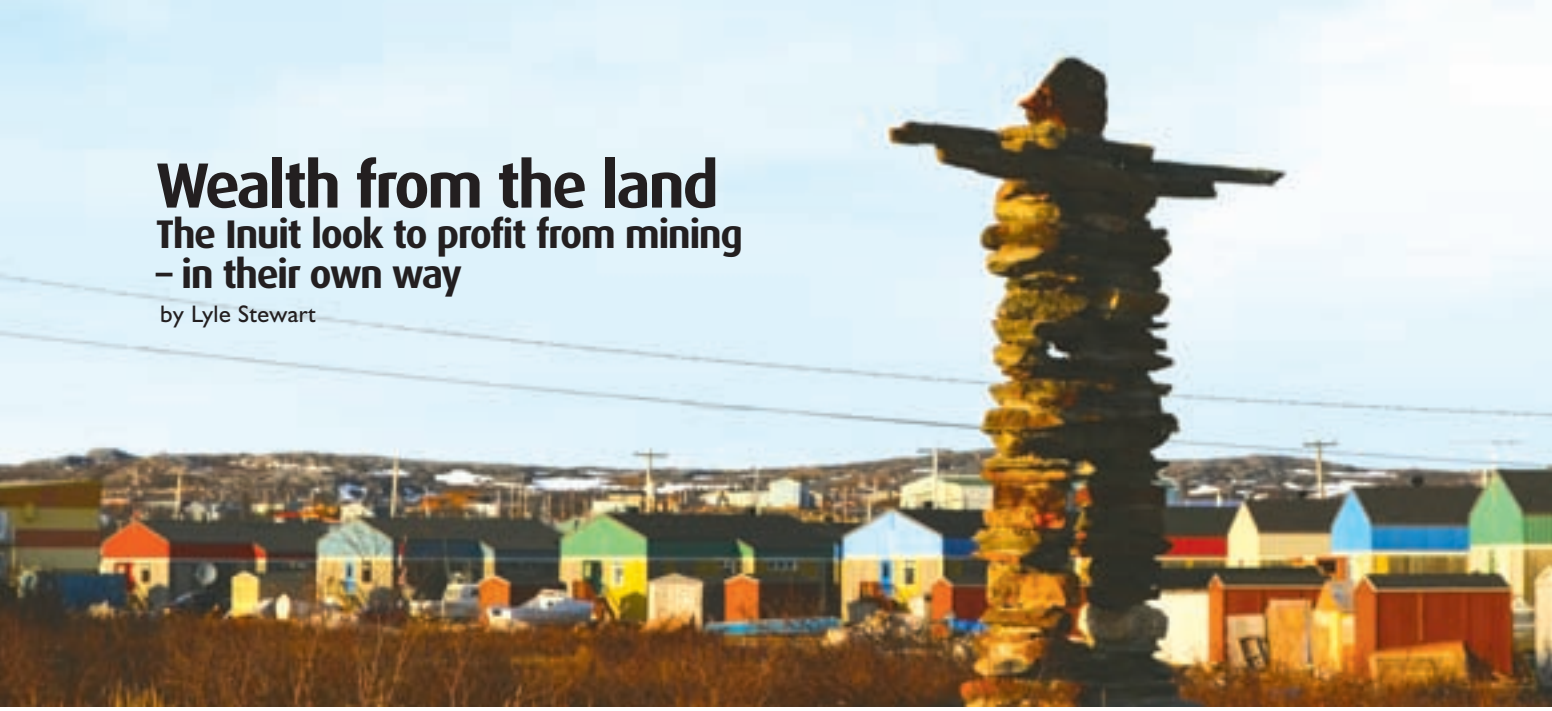
The Kashechewan evacuations are currently costing the federal government close to $20 million annually. But for some members of the community, the real cost of the floods isn't monetary.

Flood damage to many homes has forced almost 400 people out of the community until their houses can be repaired. Mould growth from moisture and sewage overflow has made an already difficult housing situation in Kashechewan even worse. Today, an entire neighbourhood of the community remains empty. Most of the families who once lived there have been living for over a year in temporary accommodations in Kapuskasing, Ontario.

"People are extremely frustrated," said Angus. "They're asking why the community isn't just being moved to higher ground."

For those lucky enough to be making their way home this spring, the challenges continue.

"The evacuation taking place during goose break season means it interrupts peoples' opportunity to provide food for their families in the coming year," Angus observed. "It's emotionally traumatic, culturally disruptive and has an enormous emotional impact on the people of Kashechewan."



Wealth from the land

The Inuit look to profit from mining – in their own way

by Lyle Stewart

As in Eeyou Istchee, the 14 Inuit communities of Nunavik are anticipating a resource boom as mining and exploration companies map Northern Quebec's rich geology. But they are facing enormous environmental, cultural and transportation issues that have them looking enviously at their Cree cousins to the south.

The Kuujjuaq Mining Workshop, held April 28-30 in Nunavik's largest community, brought these issues to light as Inuit leaders, mining and construction companies gathered for an annual information-sharing conference.

Jobie Tukkiapik, recently re-elected to a second term as president of Makivik Corporation, told delegates that Nunavik is now prepared to deal with mining and mineral exploration in the vast territory after completing a consultation report – the Nunavik Inuit Mining Policy – with all 14 communities.

"It gave the Inuit time to reflect on where we would like to go," Tukkiapik said. "In 2015, we are in an entirely new context. We are equipped with clear mandates for our relationship with government and business."

To the Cree, the Mining Policy will sound familiar. It mandates three broad directions: to maximize short- and long-term social and economic benefits for Nunavik Inuit; minimize negative social and environmental impacts; and, to establish open dialogue and good communications.

Like the Cree, the Inuit of Northern Quebec are facing a demographic explosion. "About 35% of our population is under 15, and this creates challenges and opportunities," said the Makivik president, who manages the territory's income under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Former Cree Grand Chief Ted Moses gave a keynote speech to the conference, beginning with an anecdote about ice fishing in the far north. "We went ice fishing for artic char through six feet of ice," he recounted with a grin. "I'm six foot one, so that's how long it took me to bring my fish up!"

Moses told attendees that the overall experience with the min-

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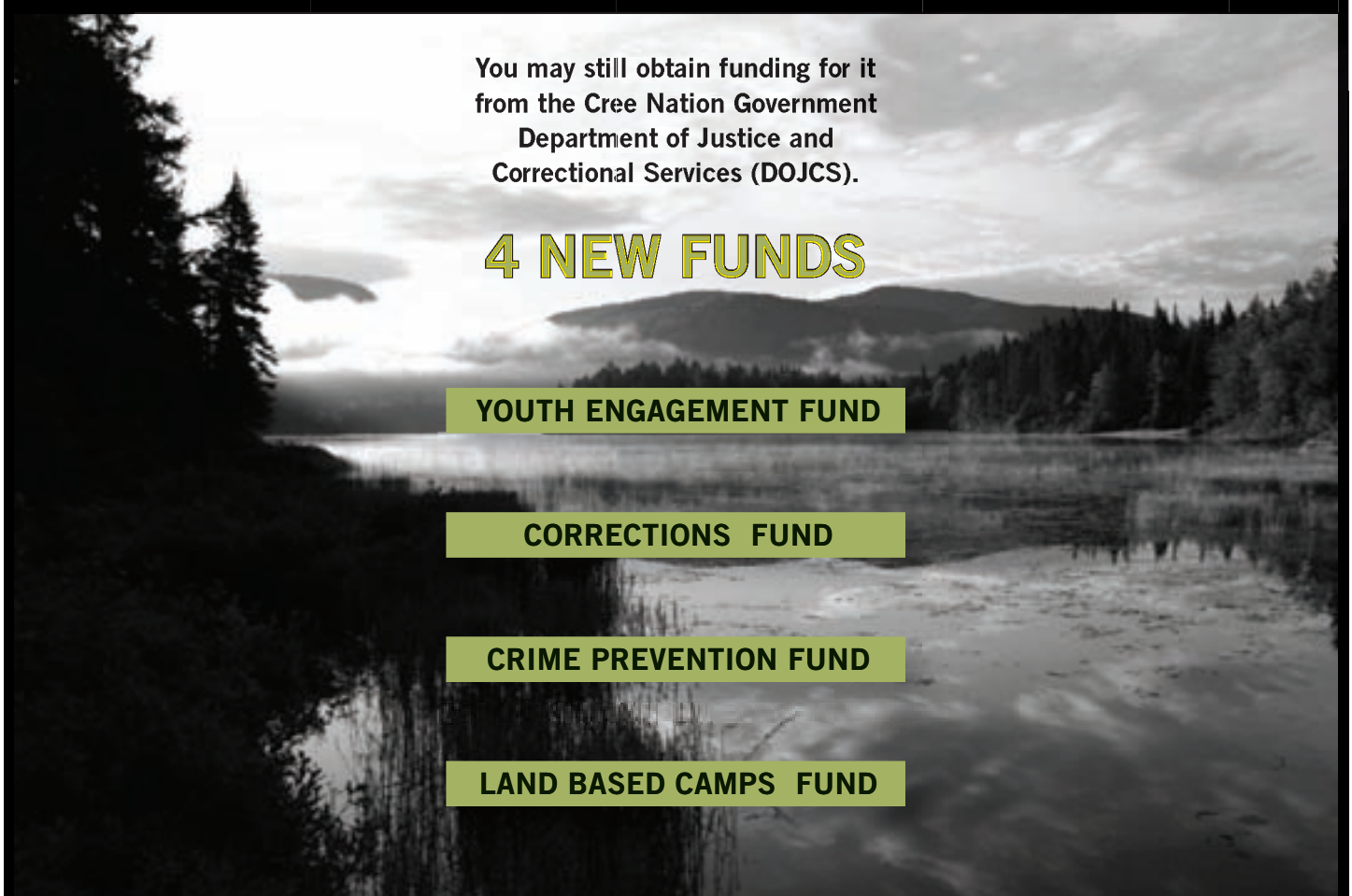

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ing industry in Eeyou Istchee has been positive.

"Today, the mining industry and the James Bay Crees have a proven track record as effective partners," he said. "We have developed enduring relationships. It is still a work in progress, but we are on solid ground."

He noted that the core principles of this relationship were also developed in consultation with the people of Eeyou Istchee.

"Good business partnerships are critically important," Moses insisted. "We seek to be active participants, not just bystanders. After all, business is business and we are open for business."

Except for the Strateco uranium project, that is, saying opposition to the Matoush project has not impeded other work in Cree territory.

"Scarcely a month goes by without another project being announced," he said.

Moses echoed his Inuit counterpart by noting the Cree effort to maximize jobs in development projects. "In this way, our local businesses will thrive and young people are encouraged to remain in Eeyou Istchee."

Indeed, the conference was also a hotbed of networking activity. Kong-struction, the Kangirsuk-based construction company profiled in the Nation recently, was very active taking meetings with various mining concerns to promote their Inuit workforce that will help companies meet agreement employment targets.

Because of a lack of road or rail access, however, construction companies like Kong-struction face large handicaps compared to First Nations communities further south.

During one of their meetings, Nunavik business leader and former Kativik Regional Government head Johnny Adams spoke about how, despite the Plan Nord, shipping subsidies from the Quebec government end at the Lower North Shore.

This renders the cost of everything from groceries to heavy machinery far higher in the far north, he said, and will be a major obstacle to development.

Then there's a differing tax structure that disadvantages Inuit businesses, said Inuk Johnny Peters, who approached the microphone to make a statement after Ted Moses' speech.

"We envy our fellow aboriginal groups, the Crees," Peters told Moses. "You are less challenged than we are. The Inuk interested in business here are burdened with high payments of taxes. That's a challenge. Taxes to the federal government, which is not present in our region here. And taxes to Quebec. And to municipalities. We are burdened big time."

There are many exploration companies operating in Nunavik, Peters went on, which says that there is value in the region.

"Young people would like to get into business but don't have opportunity. I am a businessperson myself so I know these challenges," he observed. "We should give opportunity for them to excel in what they want to do. But in fact they are almost discouraged. I am worried for future of younger generation. But we are making it hard for them.

"Yes we talk about Inuit moving forward, but we hit a wall when it comes to taxes. For every movement they make. It piles up. That's the reality of Nunavik."

Another challenge is how communities should negotiate Impact Benefit Agreements (IBAs) with individual companies.

Carleton University researcher Thierry Rodon is studying social acceptability of resource extraction industries in Eeyou Istchee and Nunavik. He detailed the still-evolving relationship between govern-

ments, business and First Nations communities in territories that still face unresolved land ownership questions.

Social acceptability, Rodon said, "is a very messy business. It's a result from many different actions. The quality of a relationship between a mining company and a community is a measure of trust and expectations."

To begin with, the negotiation of an IBA represents a power relationship. "These are usually negotiated by lawyers," he observed. "IBAs tend to look alike, and are negotiated on the basis of blueprints. Small communities have a greater difficulty reaching a good IBA. There is high pressure from companies, which are able to leverage more money on the market once an IBA is signed."

However, an IBA does not always benefit the community, emphasized Rodon. For instance, the northern Ontario Cree community of Attawapiskat had an IBA with the de Beers diamond giant, but conditions in the community did not improve. In fact, they deteriorated.

That's why Rodon insisted that this power relationship must be rebalanced in favour of communities. "They should resist pressure to sign quickly," he said. "They should look for benefits that go beyond the life of the project."

According to Rodon, the following elements help build a beneficial Impact Benefit Agreement:

- Build social acceptability into negotiations – not only the chief and council should be involved
- Obtain compensation that is not linked to the ups and downs of the market.
- Equal use and distribution of compensation; in certain cases, some communities benefit more than others, which creates dissension.
- Ability to enforce and implement the IBA. If a company goes out of business, the IBA disappears while negative impacts remain.

It was food for thought for many attendees, many of who went up to the microphone to sharply criticize the mining industry for the environmental and social impacts on their communities. It also underlined the fact that change is inevitable and that communities must be prepared to defend their rights and maximize the returns of resource exploitation to their people.

HUMAN
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VISIONNARY

Several student award winners during the CSEDVS evening : **Graham Cheezo**, **Julie Natalie Matacham**, **Darlene House**, **Pauline Lameboy**, **Mario Katapatuk**.

Mrs. **Christine Desrochers** of the UQAT Val-d'Or Campus, remits a scholarship to Mrs. **Cathy Iserhoff** and Mr. **Graham Cheezo**, both students in the Certificate in management and regional development program.

The *Fondation de l'Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue* and the *Corporation de développement de l'enseignement supérieur de la Vallée-de-l'Or* recognized several Aboriginal students as recipients receiving academic scholarships for the excellence of their academic record, their involvement in the community and their courage in returning to school.

Mr. **Jean Cotten**, FUQAT Board of directors member, presents the Rodéo du Camion de Notre-Dame-du-Nord Scholarship to **Sakia Wabie-Alarie**, student in the Bachelor in social work program.

Mrs. **Isabelle Lessard**, Parliamentary Assistant for the regional Member of Parliament of Rouyn-Noranda and representing Mr. Geoffrey Kelly, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, presents a scholarship to Mrs. **Maureen Papatie**, student in the Bachelor of preschool education and primary teaching program.

Mrs. **Marie-Pierre Beaucage**, Communications advisor with Canadian Malartic Corporation and Mr. **Vincent Rousson**, UQAT Val-d'Or Campus director, present a scholarship to Mrs. **Sakia Wabie-Alarie**, student in the Bachelor in social work program.

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Open letter: Bill C-51, Anti-terrorism Act

Dear Sirs,

First of all, as an aboriginal, this legislation not only targets us but also threatens us. Too long we have been terrorized trying to live peacefully on our ancestral lands, which strangers have referred to as "lands that belong to nobody" ever since Christopher Columbus arrived on a boat. This bill will criminalize us when we are involved in civil disobedience while protecting our ancestral territories.

Our land is our life. Just imagine if this bill had been around 5O years ago. We Crees would not have what we have today, that's for sure. The sweeping scope of Bill C-51directly violates our ability as Aboriginal peoples to express dissent and defend our constitutionally protected and judicially recognized Aboriginal title and rights to lands we have occupied since time immemorial.

The “heart and soul” of other governments is “resource development projects” on Indian land. I feel our Cree leadership and as ordinary Indians, we should launch a constitutional challenge because our Aboriginal rights have already been violated by not consulting us on Bill C-51. Something has to happen here.

From Paul Dixon and family
Windy Lake, (Waswanipi Cree First Nation)

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UNDER THE NORTHERN SKY

Ten Thousand Steps

by Xavier Kataquapit

It is well known that First Nation people all across this country suffer from diabetes and heart disease. The Cree of James Bay started to develop these health problems decades ago when so-called progress came to our remote First Nations. Some of us ended up with jobs working for the local band administration, the hospital or in education. Many of us left our communities to seek education and work elsewhere. Those hard and demanding days of living mostly on the land began to fade away.

Thanks to the remoteness of so many First Nations there are still a lot of my people living part time on the land in the traditional ways of our ancestors. However, most of these people are Elders as the young among us have fallen into so many negative lifestyles that don't permit or allow for life on the land.

Over the decades, life for many changed and became hopeless for younger people. There were not enough employment opportunities in our communities and governments encouraged a cycle of dependency. Past governments created the residential school systems right across Canada and stole children from First Nation families. These experiences affected a few generations in tragic negative ways. While other Canadians found growth and prosperity in their communities we could only dream of the luxurious lives we saw daily on television or read about in magazines and newspapers.

Many of my people fell into terrible addictions with alcohol and drugs. I have seen the devastation myself in my short time in this life. I have known too many family members, friends, neighbours and acquaintances come to tragic endings. Still, I have hope for the future because I also see that in fact a huge number of us have survived and have discovered the ways and means to live clean and sober lives. This process is ongoing and will continue so that more of our young people will find a balance in their lives and be able to move ahead with education and become contributing members of society.

I have known many leaders, Elders and dedicated Aboriginal health and education professionals over the past couple of decades that committed themselves to assisting our youth to become healthier in mind and body. Through education in terms of addictions, suicide prevention, self-awareness and self-confidence many young people have been given a helping hand up. Many discovered a connection with the past that has helped to heal and encourage First Nation youth all across this country.

I am constantly reminded that life is a struggle. I am extremely happy and grateful to be clean and sober and in recovery from alcoholism, but I have also become a junk food addict. So many of my people have addictions to junk food and combined with living a more modern couch-potato lifestyle we are dying early with diabetes and heart disease. To make matters worse most of us have also discovered the Internet and we spend countless hours surfing the web and chatting on social media.

Recently, when I decided to help a friend out with a construction project I was amazed at what bad shape I was in. When I started to dig and lift and build I thought I could keep up the same pace and effort. I was shocked to find myself tiring easily and at the end of the day my entire body was sore. I recalled what a doctor had told me during a recent check up. He noted that I was overweight and should start to eat healthier and exercise more.

Happily I have discovered that one easy thing I can do is to walk 10,000 steps every day. Many health experts suggest that 10,000 steps is a good goal for anyone who wants to burn calories and get in shape. By committing myself to walking 10,000 steps every day I also find it is easier to make good food choices as I am feeling better and that makes me more interested in making more positive decisions. To keep track of your steps it is as easy as using most modern smartphones with built in pedometers or you can purchase small and inexpensive pedometers to keep you on track. Drag yourself away from your laptop, computer or television and get on a treadmill or better still open up the door and head outside for your 10,000 steps. Your life will be better for it.

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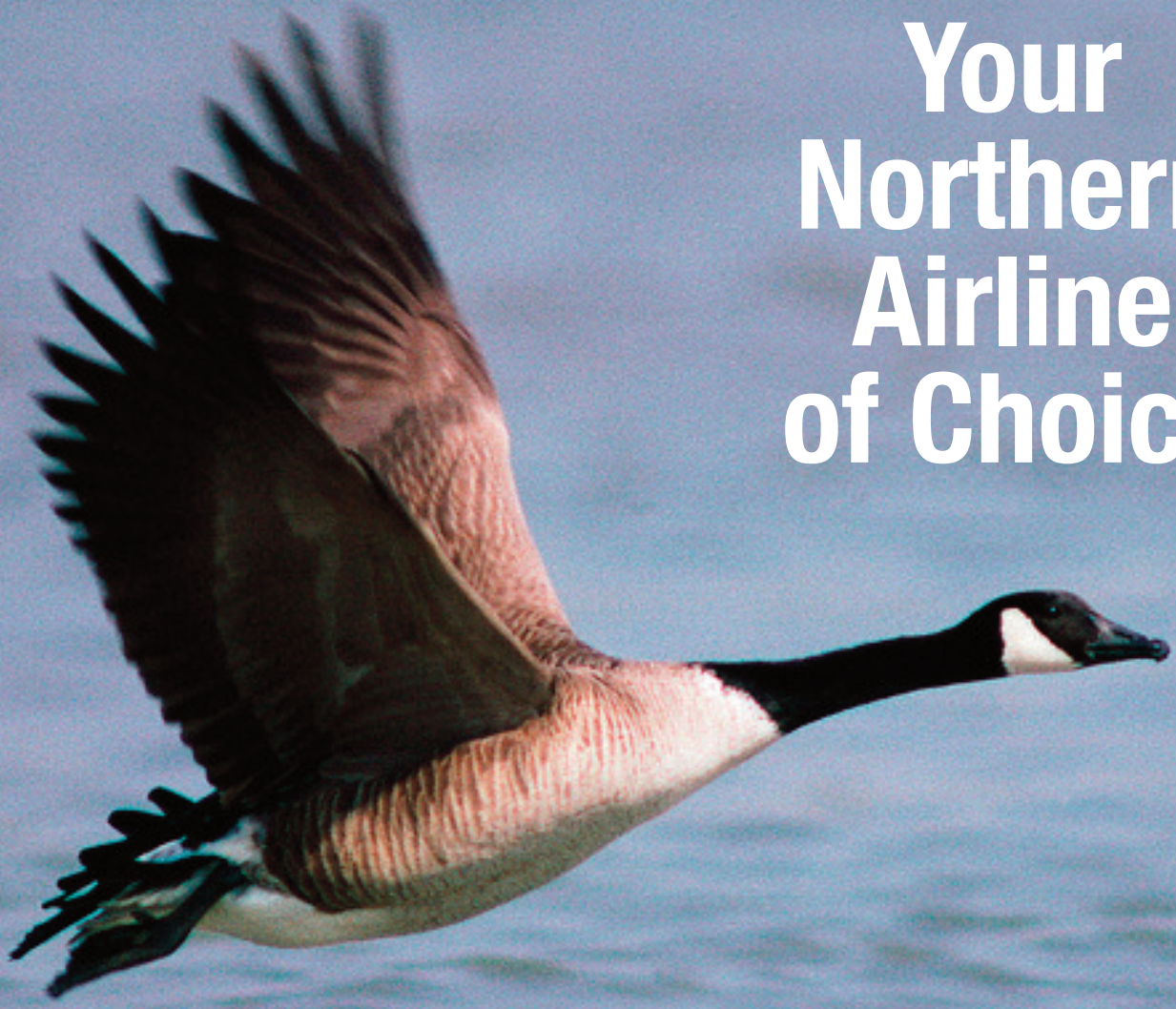

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